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**Z-2504**  
**HERSCHEL & MARY COOK**  
**R2U & NB to R3**

**STAFF REPORT**  
**August 9, 2012**

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**REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:**

Petitioners, who are the owners and represented by Daniel Teder, are requesting rezoning of Lots 4-11 in Barbee's Addition to the City of Lafayette from R2U and NB to R3 for a proposed 32 unit apartment building. The site, bordered by the Harrison Bridge (Union Street) between N. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets is the former location of The Pub. The property is more commonly known as 407 Union Street in Lafayette, Fairfield 20 (SE) 23-4.

**ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:**

Most of the property in question is zoned NB, neighborhood business; a small portion at the southern end is zoned R2U, two-family residential in the urban area. Surrounding zoning districts are varied: R3 (multi-family residential) is located directly east across 5<sup>th</sup> Street, I1 (light industrial) can be found north across Union Street, and R2U dominates primarily to the south and west.

The most recent rezone in the area occurred across Salem Street at its intersection with 6<sup>th</sup>. This rezone to R3 was given a recommendation of denial by staff and approved by the Lafayette City Council in May 2008.

**AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:**

A former restaurant and bar is located on site as well as petitioner's office location and a sea of parking; both of these structures would be razed to accommodate the proposed apartment building and required parking.

The site is located at the northern edge of the Historic Centennial Neighborhood and is surrounded by a mix of uses. Apartments border to the east, a light industrial warehouse is north and single family homes, many converted to multi-unit rentals are located south.

**TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:**

Two existing aligned access points are shown; one off of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and another from 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The site currently has an additional curb cut off of Union Street, this drive would be closed.

Only 56 parking spaces are required for this proposed 32 unit, 63 bedroom building (1.75 spaces required per unit). However, petitioners have submitted a commitment with this rezone that 63 spaces will be provided—a ratio of one per bedroom.

The new CityBus transfer station is currently under construction two blocks to the south of the proposed site at 3<sup>rd</sup> & North Street. Two bus routes, the Tippecanoe Mall and Union Street loops run directly past the property.

### **SCHOOLS:**

Children living at this development would attend Miller Elementary School.

Purdue students living in this building could apply for a C parking permit as they would live outside of the 1.5 mile eligibility radius

### **STAFF COMMENTS:**

Petitioners' property is located at a prominent gateway to the Historic Centennial Neighborhood. The Pub, a long-standing commercial use, has been closed for over a year. In 2010, the Lafayette City Council directed the Area Plan Commission, in conjunction with the neighborhood and Ratio Architects to create a neighborhood plan.

The plan is nearly complete, but as yet unadopted. It serves as a representation of the desires of the neighborhood and staff for the future of this area, identifies this site as a Level A redevelopment location with a future land use of medium density mixed-use. The plan states that "new proposed infill...should be designed to complement the surrounding structures to maintain and reinforce the desired neighborhood character and historic development pattern." The plan adds that a mixed-use medium density development should include both residential and commercial uses with minimal street setbacks and parking oriented to the rear on heavily traveled streets.

A variety of buildings could be constructed at this location including a single apartment building with other commercial buildings instead of the more typical commercial first floor with residential upper floors. Whatever its configuration, this site should serve as a transition between less intense residential uses and downtown uses; two to three stories is an appropriate height for a development at this location. Additionally, a mixed use development could make more efficient use of surface parking by sharing the area with another business or use that requires parking at different times of the day.

The submitted site plan and accompanying commitment which holds petitioners to the rendering, is typically suburban and uninspired. The proposed building is inappropriate for a near downtown area and not at all true to the neighborhood's historic character and recommendation of the plan that new buildings be "compatible with the character of historic surroundings."

While staff supports a residential component, any development at this site must be mixed-use. Examples suggested by the plan include professional offices and storefronts with residential on the upper floors or in separate buildings. This site serves as an

important gateway into both the City of Lafayette, with its excellent visibility from the Harrison Bridge, and the Centennial Neighborhood. Any redevelopment of this site must, according to the plan, “reflect the block’s importance in its architecture within the limits of the medium density mixed-use” land use.

The revitalization of the Centennial Neighborhood is a testament to what a group of concerned citizens can do to reinvigorate a declining area. While this site is ripe for redevelopment, such a prominent location deserves a better-thought out design that fits into the neighborhood and serves as a gateway into our community. Staff looks forward to working with the property owners and developer to create a project that ultimately is beneficial to the neighborhood and fulfills the goals of the plan.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Denial